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BULLETIN

OF THE

UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

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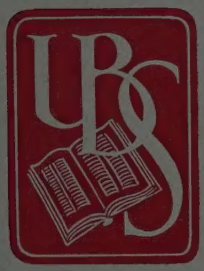

1952
FIRST QUARTER

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

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FIRST QUARTER - 1952

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*Translated into English by BERYL GUY.

Editorial

ONE of the most heartening things I have read during the past few months is a small booklet, recently published by the Agricultural Mission (New York), entitled " The Growing Edge of the Church." This publication simply contains a collection of forty to fifty short reports or testimonies sent by missionaries chosen from all parts of the world and within a wide denomina-

tional range, in answer to an enquiry regarding forward movement and progress in the lands of the Younger Churches. The reader is not presented with an academic, theoretical or statistical study of the growth of the Church, but with a series of snapshots, showing how in many places, simply by the witness and devotion of a handful of really true and faithful Christians, churches are extending and growing, self-support is being achieved, buildings are being erected and life is flowing abundantly. The impact on reading this booklet comes more than anything else from the soberness and the absence of any sentimental pathos with which these records of actual experiences are written. It is powerful, because it shows life as it is and not an adornment of reality. For church-goers in our western countries who are accustomed to seeing attendance at services decreasing rather than increasing (and who are too often not sufficiently concerned about it), and who are resigned (or nearly so, alas) to accepting the fact that the rise of materialism and the search for an easy life cannot be checked by powerful evangelism, such reading is a welcome tonic ; it shows that elsewhere at least the Church not only exists, but is very much alive and developing and growing.

The booklet is introduced by some notes which summarise the main aspects of this growth of the Church, as described in the testimonies. They underline the necessity or rather the indispensability of lay evangelism and voluntary witness in any growth of the Church, the importance of encouraging new churches to become self-supporting as soon as possible, the necessity of developing local leadership, local initiative and local responsibility in the largest practicable measure, the possibility and perhaps the advisability in many cases for missionaries to withdraw from a field where their presence is limiting the scope of activity of nationals and to start new work elsewhere. All these problems are very much in the minds of missionaries and missionary boards to-day. They form the core of much thoughtful consideration on the missionary calling, as it is to be found and defined in our day. They are problems with which the Bible Societies have also been faced, or which they must yet face, to which they have already found or will have to find a solution. Bible distribution in our day is no longer the affair of a few agents and some full-time colporteurs : every church member must become a colporteur and a missionary. The younger Bible Societies still need the help of the old established Bible Societies, but more than ever it is becoming essential that they aim at and work towards increased local support, in their own way and by their own means and methods. And conversely, it is just as important that the 'mother' Bible Societies forget about prestige, throw off the weight of history and tradition and remain sufficiently alert to be able to 'withdraw,' not only *when* they judge that the younger Societies have gained sufficiently in strength, but perhaps also *in order that* the latter may gain sufficient strength.

The experiences referred to in " The Growing Edge of the Church " clearly show that life, growth, strength do not lie in organisation, in systems, in administration, in wealth ; they do not even depend so much—and let us accept this with humility, but also in simplicity—on the number, the devotion and the energy of the foreign missionaries. The Church grows when individual souls on the spot are set on fire by the Holy Spirit, when genuinely converted men and women are given definite and growing responsibilities and take the Gospel to their fellow-workers, their neighbours, their friends, their relatives. Similarly, it is not the work, the devotion, the strength and the money of a few Bible Societies which will secure an increased corresponding circulation

of the Scriptures ; this will be attained only when the younger Bible Societies, the Bible Societies in formation and the insufficiently missionary-minded among the older Societies, the advisory committees, the auxiliaries, the agencies and sub-agencies all over the world really embrace the vision of their calling, and when they assume (and are also given the chance to assume) their share of responsibility, when they accept the fact that it is up to them and not to others to see that the Word of God is produced and distributed all over the world. It is only by a corporate effort, by mutual encouragement, by wise distribution of responsibilities and by reasonable—and perhaps sometimes adventurous, in the right sense—boldness in inaugurating new ways of action, in dropping useless or hampering methods and habits and in giving up any kind of pride or self-contentment, that the Bible Societies will be able in the future to cope with the task which is set before them. It is in this spirit only that the Bible Societies will be able to establish constructive policies in their own work, in their dealings with other societies, as well as in the meetings—regional or general—of the U.B.S., in a world where the edge of the Church is growing and where new churches everywhere are witnessing to the crucified and risen Lord, the hope of the world.

For there is a final point which the study of this booklet reveals. There is no hope for the Church to live, to witness and to grow, if the Bible is not given the fundamental place in its life. There is no Church, in the full sense of the word, when there is no Bible study, no expository preaching founded on the Word of God, no witness rooted in the message and teaching of the Scriptures. What this little booklet reveals, in this respect, is this : everywhere, where the edge of the Church is growing, " a vast amount of Bible study is going on. Sometimes it is through a faithful teacher of a Bible class. Sometimes it is in an extensive system carefully organised and supervised to operate over a wide area through paid workers or through volunteers. Sometimes it is through a song memorised and taught by one illiterate to another. The methods differ, and the degrees of thoroughness differ widely too. The indication seems to be that the enduring value of striking revivals will depend in large measure upon establishing and maintaining real Bible study. One test of theological schools and Bible schools is their capacity to develop people, study books, and a system which will carry this Bible study through to the last man in the last village in a way that is vital and intelligible."

One of the remarks quoted in the report of the Strategy Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Christ, which studied the lesson of missionary work in China, strikingly expresses the same view : " I would put the main emphasis upon training classes, long and short, large or small groups, regular or irregular meetings, with the main goal : a living knowledge of the Bible. This is what endures. This is the fountain of all other Christian fruit and activity."

Thank God, this consciousness of the necessity to place the Bible and the knowledge of the Bible effectively at the centre of all Christian life worthy of the name, seems to be growing in the Church. This is a new challenge to the Bible Societies ; it offers them new possibilities of service ; it opens to them a new opportunity to see their cause more fully understood in the churches ; it provides new avenues for real exchange and co-operation between the churches and Bible Societies. It is up to us not to let the occasion pass but to be sufficiently inventive to discover the ways and means—new and old—which will help us to meet the challenge.

POST-NANCY REFLECTIONS

JEAN BLUMENTHAL

WHEN the members of the committee which had been given the responsibility of laying the foundations of that which was to become " the Nancy Conference " met for the first time, two ideas immediately came to mind. Concern was expressed that brothers who are all convinced of the primary place which the Bible should occupy either do not know, or misunderstand one another, and so the first desire of the committee was to attempt to bring these men together on the only basis which seemed possible : that of the Word of God, voluntarily stripped of all dogmatic interpretation. On the other hand, having learnt by the experience of so many other conferences from which one departs with a head reeling under the massive accumulation of material which it cannot assimilate in a necessarily limited time, the committee were anxious that the talks and discussions of this conference should touch essentially on practical problems, entering into the immediate preoccupations of all who cannot be content with theories expounded *ex cathedra*, but hope to find suggestions or directives applicable without delay to their daily work.

It was not, however, without a certain amount of apprehension that the first circular letter was sent out to the heads of some thirty churches, and religious movements, societies and organisations representing in all about fifteen different denominations. What reception would the proposal of such a conference receive ? Although the representatives of two felt that it was impossible for them to meet in common research with brothers holding certain opinions differing from their own, it was a real privilege and a cause for much thanksgiving to God that it was nevertheless possible to bring together in Nancy the representatives of 13 different churches or denominations and this without any false note coming in to disrupt the fraternal atmosphere in which the conference was held. Indeed, forgetting that which might divide him from his neighbour, each of the delegates remained entirely on the basis of the Bible, its distribution, and the responsibility of the church or movement which he represented with regard to the testimony to be given to the Word of God. Not one regretted having come and all were unanimous in saying how useful the conference had been for them and in asking that it should be followed by others of like kind in the future.

After the question of the participants, there was that of the programme to be resolved. For some years now there has been much talk about the re-discovery of the Bible. How does this re-discovery affect the lives of communities and of individuals ? Is it anything other than simply an attitude ? What forms does it take ? How can we transfer it from the realm of thought to that of fact ? Such were the questions which arose in the minds of those who had now to put down in black and white the programme of the conference. Amongst so many problems, it was essential to select and establish an order of priority.

It seemed that first of all each delegate should be given the opportunity to understand the ground and make sure of his foundations on a solid basis and for that reason the first question was to know if, in our age, in present-day Europe, the Bible can still be considered as a means of evangelisation in itself.

Having asked this question, the next was how to distribute this Bible ? In order to answer this, it is first necessary to explore the ground into which the good seed of the Word of God is to be sown. This ground is man, the man of to-day, that unknown one, the one who lives so near to us and yet of whom

we know so little. Then it was necessary to consider the different means which are put at the disposal of the churches and of their members to give their testimony, and to sow this divine seed. This would of necessity lead to a consideration of the practical needs of those who are the sowers, in other words to a study of the forms under which the Scriptures should be made available to them to permit them to work at their distribution with the maximum effectiveness.

In conclusion to these studies which are useful to those who are the instruments of the re-discovery of the Bible in the various churches which came out of the Reformation, it was felt to be good that the delegates should also have the opportunity of being informed of the extraordinary fact of which we are witnesses : the re-discovery of the Bible in the Roman Catholic Church, of seeking the deep-seated reasons for it, of noting the various ways in which it has manifested itself, and of considering the problems which it raises to-day for our churches, as for our Bible Societies.

* * *

Looking back now, after some weeks, over the work of the Nancy Conference, we will attempt to pick out the main lines which can particularly help us in our task in France.

It seems to me that the first point to be underlined is the realisation by the various churches of France that the work of distributing the Bible is not only the business of the Bible Societies, but is also that of the churches. Up to the present, the latter have not been sufficiently aware of this. Only some of the professing churches or some of the evangelical sectarian groups were really methodically undertaking Bible distribution in our country. Sporadic efforts had been made by some pastors of the great multitudinous churches for a wider distribution and for a deeper knowledge of the Bible. But these efforts often had no connection one with another and were always the outcome of local initiative, without the originators feeling that this way was particularly confirmed to them by precise directives coming from the ecclesiastical authorities. The only initiative taken on a national scale in 1947 on the occasion of the national synod of the Reformed Church, with a view to organising and supporting colportage in France, failed, the financial responsibilities involved seeming to be beyond the resources of the churches who were not prepared to accept them. Apart from this attempt, one could at most take note of the wishes expressed by the various synods or assemblies, inviting the churches to give more attention to making " the Word of God known to the people of France." But the business of transferring these wishes into action was left to each man, according to his temperament, his theological training or his personal inclination.

One of the results of the Nancy Conference has been to bring to the notice of the delegates present that, besides the testimony which the churches have to give to the Word of God by preaching, by conferences, by intellectual and spiritual development to which they invite their members by means of all kinds of publications, they have also to occupy themselves with the people who are outside the churches ; with the people who have escaped from the churches, not for lack of any religious aspirations, but as a reaction against the forms of a clericalism which the past history of social and religious combats weighing down upon them have taught them to doubt. It is particularly to these brothers that we must go, Gospel in hand, simply letting the Saviour speak, Whom they will consider as one of themselves, but out of Whom they do not wish to see the holders of a contemporary neo-pharisaism making profit.

Certain Roman Catholic circles have realised this and have not been afraid to go ahead in the work of publishing and circulating the Bible, and although they have come up against contrary currents in the very heart of their Church, they have been fired with the same desire to reconcile the people to God by a return to the very source of the Christian faith, namely through a knowledge of the Gospel. A further result of the Nancy Conference was to stress both the joys and the difficulties encountered by these pioneers and to study the possibilities and the limits of collaboration on the ground of Bible distribution itself.

This gathering has also shown to those who took part, that although the Bible Societies may have a precise task which is laid upon them and which is their very *raison d'etre*, they cannot carry it out without the support of the churches. It was necessary, particularly in France, where Bible Society work has always been dependent upon support from abroad, to point out that, in spite of the very heavy burdens which are already on the shoulders of the Protestant minority—first among which is the support of its missionary work in the countries of the French Union—it also has a duty to make a more effective contribution to the budget of the Bible Societies than in the past.

Finally, when one analyses all the reasons why the work of the Bible Societies is so little known, one finds that at the basis there is need for an information service which should be strengthened, particularly among the students of the theological faculties, the pastoral body and the responsible lay members of the churches. The publication of a review like "La Bible dans le Monde" which, for the past 18 months has given information in the French language on the world-wide work of the Bible Societies, is one of the means which makes it possible for the public to be kept up to date with developments in this work. For this reason, the French Bible Committee felt it good to devote its last number to a detailed account of the work of the Nancy Conference, in order that its readers might find there the essentials of the preoccupations which were made known in Nancy and might become aware of the share of responsibility which falls upon them in the matter.

For indeed it is not sufficient to have spent three days going over problems, discovering deficiencies and expressing wishes. This must be translated into practice through action. The great hope of the organisers is that this action will not be delayed so that, during the time of grace in which we are living, the Word of God might still be distributed and received into many hearts.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NANCY CONFERENCE FOR THE WORK OF THE BELGIAN BIBLE SOCIETY

JACQUES HARTS

THE Belgian delegation to the Nancy Conference was composed of three active colporteurs, one missionary teacher who has since returned to her field in Ruanda, four pastors, belonging to four different religious organisations, the pastor of the evangelical Russian church in Belgium, who is also chaplain to the refugees and Displaced Persons, and the General Secretary of the Belgian Bible Society.

Although all engaged in active evangelistic and missionary work, the members of this team, as one of them said, "discovered a force of which they hardly knew anything : 'The Bible Society'." Another wrote : "I have

come away with real benefit from this meeting. To begin with, I have learnt more about the activity of the Bible Societies and of the results obtained. To have met the men themselves and to have heard them talking about their problems has also given me a more exact idea of the work of the Bible Societies. I had thought that they were merely printing agencies, doing mechanical work. The Nancy Conference has shown me that, on the contrary, they are teams pre-occupied with the spiritual questions of our day and are essential cells in the evangelisation of the world ; these are teams fired with a spirit of conquest which need to be upheld by gifts and in prayer."

It seems to us that, after the Nancy Conference, this spreading of information and the material and moral support which results from it should gradually win over all the evangelical communities of our country. Most of them know little or nothing about the young Belgian Bible Society. It is essential that they should be won by the vision which, together with all the other Bible Societies, grouped together in the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, we have received from God : to make the Bible widely known, the Bible which is not only " a book to nourish piety," but the living and life-giving Word of our Heavenly Father.

For our Bible colporteurs, the Nancy Conference was a wonderful opportunity to leave their usual field of work for a few days and to meet outside of our frontiers with brethren engaged in the same conflict, exchanging experiences, enriching their knowledge and renewing their vision of the object to be pursued. One of these wrote : " I have been stimulated, comforted, encouraged. I have returned from the Conference with the ambition to do more and better in the service which has been entrusted to me. I have worked out a plan which will, I hope, produce results in the months to come. I have taken as my working principle to present the Bible in the first place. When, for financial reasons, I cannot sell that, then I present the New Testament, or a Gospel . . . . ." Since the Nancy Conference, this brother has been selling more than 200 Bibles a month.

We might sum up by saying that Nancy has enabled us to " get our bearings " in a particularly clear and living way over many problems which are raised to-day by the translation, printing and distribution of the Word of God. For the Belgian Bible Society this Conference has given birth to a certainty which had so far only been shared by the members of the Council : that of belonging to a great universal family, founded not on human will, but on the purpose of God. This can have a very big repercussion in a country with a very small evangelical minority and help to bring the various members of this minority, who are already associated " on paper," more closely together in the heart of the Belgian Bible Society. One of our pastors wrote : " The Nancy Conference provided material for several sermons in the church of B. and in others. This panoramic view of evangelisation on a European and on a world-wide scale is doing good for our Belgian Protestant communities which often suffer from a minority complex and from poverty."

It would be impossible to enumerate all the consequences which will evolve from the discussions and decisions in Nancy for the future activity of our Society. The important thing is that a very strong impulse should have been given which will not cease. There was much talk at Nancy about the " re-discovery of the Bible " in the Roman Catholic Church. Many of the participants are united in prayer that there should also be a " re-discovery of the Bible " in the Protestant communities. God gives us the joy of expecting it soon, not only in our country, but throughout the world which is waiting with earnest expectation " for the manifestation of the sons of God."

LOOKING TOWARDS ASIA

IN preparation for the Conference of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES to be held in Ootacamund, South India, next February, various questionnaires have been sent to the Bible Societies and the Bible Society agencies in the Far East, South and South-East Asia. One set of questions dealt more particularly with an essential aspect of Bible Society concern : the place which the Bible Societies and the work of the Bible Societies occupy in the life and interest of the local churches. In practically all the countries concerned, "Younger Churches" have been established and the missionary societies, although organising, backing and financing these churches, are placing more and more responsibility on the shoulders of the indigenous leaders and communities. A similar process has taken place in the field of the Bible Societies, wherever the size of the churches and their vitality could warrant such a step. It has been the common aim of both missionary and Bible Societies to promote the development of indigenous, self-supporting bodies, so as to be at least partially relieved and able to use their own forces in other still untouched or insufficiently developed areas.

A self-supporting church is not only a church which covers say its own administrative and running expenses, it is a church which also takes seriously its responsibility in supporting actively and financially the production and the distribution of copies of the Holy Scriptures in its own language. The creation of a national Bible Society is not a way of camouflaging the activity of a foreign body, but it is a step, desirable and necessary, to help the local churches to consider the production of cheap copies of the Scriptures and their missionary circulation as a part of their own task and responsibility.

Although administratively independent of any church organisation, the Bible Societies and their agencies are as it were the heart of the Church, providing all members and cells of the Body with the Word of life, without which the Body is dead and useless. In return, they need—if they are to be fully fitted for their work—to be nurtured by the whole Body and all its members and cells. Should this support fail, the whole Body and its own future is endangered.

The following notes give a bird's-eye-view of this aspect of the relations between churches and Bible Societies in a particular area where neither churches nor Bible Societies are self-supporting. They will, it is hoped, help the readers of the BULLETIN to follow more closely in their thoughts and prayers, the studies and discussions which are going to take place in Ootacamund in respect to the future policy of the Bible Societies in Asia. They could also incite us to undertake some self-criticism and induce us to reconsider, in some cases, our own line of action and policy, in so far as our various Bible Societies still need to be more fully integrated and rooted into the life of our churches and our nations. O. B.

Burma : Our work is more or less taken for granted by most of the churches. The Baptists (who are three-quarters of the Christian community) printed all their own Scriptures up to 1942 and are gradually getting used to depending on the Bible Society. Their support and co-operation are increasing year by year. Local contributions are four times the pre-war average. They now run to about Rs. 20,000 (about £1,500 or $4,200) a year, half of which comes from church collections, the remaining half from subscriptions collected privately. Bible Sunday is widely observed and is often the occasion of a collection for the Bible Society.

Ceylon : Here in Ceylon we are just emerging from the position that the Bible Society and its work was taken for granted and there is a growing consciousness in the churches and Christian circles of the importance of our work. The Society is much more on the map of the church than it has ever been before. We are beginning to be consulted by the church when special campaigns are contemplated.

Nearly all the churches hold a Bible Sunday, but only a limited number have collections for the Bible Society. Our income is secured by appeals, special meetings, deputation work, and personal interviews by the Secretary and by the activity of private collectors. We are counting on the possibility of increasing the support of the churches and individuals by more effective propaganda as well as by a Membership Campaign which is already in progress.

Hongkong : I believe there is in this area a growing consciousness of the importance of Bible Society work and a slowly growing sense of the need of supporting it. When special campaigns are planned, the Bible Society is always consulted concerning supplies.

Last year the local churches contributed approximately HK$5,000.00 (£312, $884) which was one of the best years on record. The churches hold a Bible Sunday at which they have collections for the Bible Society.

It is hoped that the residence of a Bible Society representative in this area will be the means of increasing the contributions.

India : The place of the Bible Society in the Christian setting varies in different parts of the country. Where the Society is well known—as it is generally in the South and some parts of the North—the importance of its work is recognised and co-operation and support, often active and generous, are offered.

Propaganda has been highbrow and generally in English, and the rank and file of Christians in many parts have little acquaintance with the purpose and work of the Society. One Secretary reports that 'many pastors fail to keep the members of their congregation informed of the Society's work. Information such as cost of production and circulation is passed on . . . . . but often it does not reach the members of the church.'

In most parts, missionary societies and churches consult the Bible Society when a special evangelistic campaign is launched. In other areas, however, this is not done 'except incidentally when they order large quantities of Scriptures.'

In certain areas, where there is real consciousness of the importance of Bible Society work, the contribution of the churches is generous. Kotagiri, Ootacamund and Nagpur—to mention a few—contributed in 1950 nearly Rs. 6,000 (about £450, $1,260). On the other hand, one secretary reports that 'subscriptions received are from a very small percentage of the churches.' In one area, only about 200 out of a total of 800 send collections to the Society.

The average annual contribution of local churches and individuals towards the work of the Society during the last ten years was only Rs. 78,000 (£585, $1,638). The total contribution in 1950 was Rs. 100,000. This amount can easily be multiplied a few times if the 25,000 congregations of the sub-continent become alive to the vital importance of the work of the Society.

However, contributions show an upward trend as the Society gets increasingly rooted in the Church. One Secretary reports: 'From our own experience we can confidently say that whenever an individual has been approached for a subscription to the Society's work, the response has been encouraging.' The same Secretary continues : 'Recently one church which used to send about Rs. 40 a year sent nearly Rs. 400 as the pastor was good enough to recommend to the members of his church to receive the containers of one-pice-a-day scheme. This scheme not only brought a good collection to the Society, but also was instrumental for so many new persons to take an interest and become members of the Society as their containers brought in more than a minimum of Rs. 5.'

Japan : The Japan Bible Society is one of the constituent members of the Japan National Christian Council (N.C.C.). Not only has the J.B.S. seats on the N.C.C. General Council, but it also has seats at the N.C.C. Executive Committee meeting and sends representatives to various committee meetings, such as Literature Evangelism, Visitation Evangelism, Audio-Visual Aid Evangelism and Evangelical Associations for the Blind.

The General Secretary of the J.B.S. is chairman of the N.C.C. Public Relations Committee and he has been a member of the drafting committee for preparing strategic plans for the evangelisation of Japan.

J.B.S. distribution work is in close relation with church works and with other Christian organisations, such as the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A. and the Christian Educational Association. Not only do the J.B.S. directors represent different denominations, but also at present out of 150 colporteurs, 60 are the leading local pastors.

Colportage work occupies an integral part in the evangelistic work of the churches. At the big campaigns, such as those held by Dr. Kagawa and by famous preachers from America and other countries, our colporteurs co-operate.

Concerning the support given to the work of the Bible Society, so far the churches have looked upon the Bible Society as only an agent of the American and British Bible Societies. But gradually the churches are coming to regard the Bible Society as a work which they must support.

During the year 1950 we received contributions of Yen 539,663 (£535, $1,500). We are expecting the contributions of the local churches to increase. More and more churches are holding a Bible Sunday at which a collection is taken for the Bible Society. Special meetings are also organised by the Bible Society and increasing support is coming from the members of the Society whose number is growing.

Malaya : In pre-war years the Bible Society took a very large part in the work of evangelisation through its large number of colporteurs. It appears to have been taken for granted that its support should come from abroad. An effort has been made to bring to the consciousness of the Church the idea that Bible Society work in this area should be the responsibility of the local church, both as regards finance and the dissemination of the Word of God. All agree that this is right, and while there has been a gratifying increase in income, there has been little or no response to the appeal to share colportage work. We feel the situation is improving slowly, but a great deal of propaganda still needs to be done in this connection. The local missionary societies do not launch 'special campaigns of evangelisation,' but outside evangelists sometimes do. We always learn about these and colporteurs exploit the

opportunity. At a recent campaign conducted by the Chinese evangelist, the Rev. Andrew Gih, one of our colporteurs sold almost £100 worth of Scriptures in less than a month.

In 1950 the local churches contributed £432. 9s. 11d. ($1,210) out of a total of £784. 4s. 4d. Most of them hold a Bible Sunday, and collections are taken for the Bible Society. A number of private collectors do very good work.

Pakistan : The Bible Society holds a very important place as the most effective agency in evangelism and for the growth of the Church. Every evangelistic and literacy campaign is planned in consultation with the Bible Society. Work in every new area is backed by the Bible Society, for we prepare Scriptures for the missionaries to distribute. The Church is very poor (average income per capita is less than four annas or ten cents per day) and therefore does not contribute very much to our funds, but donations come in regularly.

Some churches hold a Bible Sunday and set aside the collection for the Bible Society, but most of the donations come directly to the Bible House, in answer to the appeals that are made. Local contributions are about Rs. 10,000 (£750, $2,100) a year, that is about 35% of the local expenses (not including production of Scriptures abroad, for instance).

Philippines : We feel the Bible Society occupies a very real place in the thinking and planning of the total Protestant area of the Philippines. At the present time we have no colporteurs, but all of the distribution is done by the missions and churches. Most missionaries and most of the leading church pastors and others order and carry stocks of our Scriptures. We have at present more than 600 on our list of purchasers and they are scattered throughout the islands.

We get invitations to practically all the church conventions and conferences of any size and we are always given good place for display and always given a place on the programme for reports. We are frequently requested to give a special report which may be included in the minutes of the convention along with the regular reports. Most of the churches in the islands observe Bible Sunday and many of them take offerings. We are frequently consulted when special evangelistic campaigns are made, because that is practically the only circumstance under which we have been making free grants of Gospel Portions. Any missions or church groups planning an evangelistic campaign in any given area are given free copies of the Gospel they prefer in the language of the area, provided that there will be a follow-up campaign and a real attempt made to follow up any advantage gained by the free distribution and the reading of the Portions donated.

The churches generally do hold Bible Sunday and many of them do take offerings, although the total amount is not very large. Only two churches that I know of at present have the Bible Society in their annual budgets. Churches give offerings ranging from $1.00 to $75.00, with most of them in the smaller bracket. A few individuals also send in gifts, but we have made no strong attempt so far to raise funds in this way.

Thailand : The Bible Society works in very close harmony with all the missions and churches. When special evangelistic programmes are launched, the Scriptures are used extensively. The needs of the Bible Society are taken for granted, that is : many no doubt feel that our needs will be taken care of by our appropriation from the home base. Some offerings, however, are sent to the Bible Society on the occasion of the holding of Bible Sunday. This celebration is meeting with growing interest and larger offerings are being given.

SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION AND READING CAMPAIGNS IN THE SOUTHERN STATES OF THE U.S.A.

I. STUART MCELROY

SCRIPTURE Distribution and Reading Campaigns were conceived, inaugurated and developed by my colleague Benj. H. Smith, Secretary of the Southern District which comprises our six south-eastern states. After studying his methods, a campaign along similar lines was promoted in the State of Virginia in 1950, followed in 1951 by a campaign in the State of West Virginia. In 1952 a campaign is planned for the State of North Carolina. It is believed that this programme can be repeated on a three-year cycle.

Preparation

The campaign was launched by mailing to all pastors whose addresses could be obtained, the following letter :—

Dear Pastor :

Nothing could better undergird the evangelistic efforts of the churches in 1951 than to enlist every person in the State in the reading of at least one Gospel or other portion of the New Testament.

For this purpose I am offering to send you prepaid at half cost, in carton lots of 500, as many Gospels or other New Testament portions as you and your people can place, with an earnest request that they be read.

The portions are attractively printed and carry a message of spiritual power. When properly distributed they are read. The spiritual life of the members of your church and Sunday school will be lifted and their hearts warmed. As they distribute the Gospels to their school-mates, friends and others outside the church and urge them to read the Gospel message, a harvest of souls will be prepared for ingathering.

One pastor who had worked for a month in a similar campaign, wrote that he had received more people into the membership of his church than he had in the previous six months. Others report that, besides more additions to the church, church attendance had doubled and cash contributions had greatly increased.

Start this campaign at any time best suited to your church programme. It should not interfere with your other plans but should help you make Christ known and His way accepted. Where the churches of a community co-operate and make a country-wide simultaneous distribution the largest results may be expected, but this does not limit any church in its own efforts.

This offer is available only through the Richmond office and only as long as the funds budgeted for this project last.

Accompanying this letter was a printed sheet with suggestions to the pastor for carrying out his own distribution of the Gospels, the emphasis being placed on the outreach in the community. Among the situations offering opportunity for emphasising the reading of the portions and their distribution were the church services, prayer meetings, all group meetings in the church school, the preparation for and the conduct of evangelistic services ; in pastoral visiting, in lay visitation by church groups, in class work, in vacation Bible schools, public schools, jails and hospitals, house to house calling and not omitting the farmer and day labourer.

The Suggestion Sheet carried a copy of a suggested invitation to be used in passing out the portions, each pastor providing his own printing.

AN INVITATION

We urge you to read this Gospel.
We are reading it in our church.

We welcome you to worship God and study His Word with us.
This little Book of the Bible is given as evidence of our interest in your spiritual welfare.
We will gladly help you secure a good readable Bible if you desire one.

(Here was to be inserted the name of the church and hours of its services.)

Use this as your bookmark as you read.

The Suggestion Sheet also carried specific directions for the pastor :—

(1) Have some group from your church visit all families not represented in the work of the church, presenting a Gospel to each one who will agree to read it and giving an invitation to attend the church services during the Bible Reading Campaign.

(2) Instruct these visitors to keep the names and addresses of all families who need a good readable Bible. Offer a copy of the New Testament or Bible to all who become interested through reading the Gospel. Your church or some group in your church can buy the Bibles for these homes and thus bind them closer to your church.

(3) During the campaign or immediately thereafter make a special effort to bring into active relation with the church all the unconverted and those whose membership is elsewhere.

(4) Prepare a mimeographed or printed invitation in your church services, 3 by 4½ inches in size, to serve as a bookmark for the reader. This will encourage people to attend your church worship and other activities.

(5) For your church members prepare a suggested message to help them in distributing the Gospels. It might read as follows :—

"Please read at once this little Gospel, considering Christ's claims upon your life. As you read, mark those verses which have touched your own heart. Then secure from the church a number of additional copies and, having marked the same verses in them, give them to every person you can reach, asking them to read the Gospel also. This is one way every Christian can bear the positive witness : 'I have read this little book. You will find certain passages I have marked which mean much to me ; I would like you to read it also.' "

An order card was prepared which clearly presented the terms on which the pastor might secure the portions he wanted. Addressed to the Bible Society, the card read :—

Thank you for this offer. I will gladly pay my half of the volumes ordered below. I understand that the offer is good only on unbroken cartons containing 500 copies of the same title. I have indicated below the number of cartons wanted of each title.

The order card allowed the pastor to place his order without cash payment. In this, the experience of Secretary Smith was followed as he had found that many more orders were placed on this basis than when the " Cash with Order " policy was enforced. Only about 4% of the volumes were not paid for, but this does not mean that they were not used. It does mean that the distribution of the Gospels would not have been accomplished in these small churches had the " Cash with Order " been strictly enforced

What the Churches Did

The approach was made only to the pastors. The Suggestion Sheet recommended co-operation in a community on the part of the churches but this was very rarely carried out.

Pastors report that many different groups in their churches took active part in the distribution ; school children, young people, adult groups and even

Christian merchants participated by buying supplies to enclose with each purchase made at their store counters.

No effort was made to put on the campaign in all the churches at a definite time but many of the churches took advantage of the offer as a Lenten activity. Since it was stated that the campaign offer would be withdrawn when the funds were exhausted, many churches ordered the portions, planning to use them as much as six months later.

The Field Worker

Experience has shown, both in the Southern District and in this District, that the success of this campaign cannot be left to promotion by mail. In both Districts energetic, consecrated pastors who were temporarily without charges were secured and, after training, sent into the field to visit the pastors and enlist their participation in the campaign. These field workers were employed on a commission basis and an expense account, which gave both the District office and the field worker a stake in the success of his work. It must be said, however, that these men worked with an enthusiasm which could not have emanated from the expectation of mere financial reward. They believed whole-heartedly in the purpose and goals of the campaign.

The District Secretary went into the area with the field worker to show him how to approach the pastors. Some such words as the following were used :—

> We are calling in connection with the Scripture Distribution and Reading Campaign about which you have already received a letter from the American Bible Society. The Bible Society is interested in helping you put the Scriptures into the hands of everyone in your community. Every pastor is responsible for at least 500 souls. Somewhere in your church programme you want to get your own people to read the Scriptures. The Society's offer to give you one half the portions you will distribute is made in order that you and your people might reach those who are outside the church. Your only obligation is to pay for your half and make an earnest effort to geet all the booklets distributed and read. The Bible Society makes this offer in line with its missionary programme to secure the wider distribution of the Scriptures by aiding and co-operating with the churches. You have had time to consider this in terms of your church programme. Will you not therefore indicate on this order card the titles that you wish to use and sign it right now ?

A follow-up letter called the attention of the pastors to the need which undoubtedly would be revealed for Bibles and Testaments, and urged the pastors to secure the Scriptures needed. Only in cases of real need were the Testaments and Bibles donated.

Appraisal

In comparison with the total population of the state, the 350,000 volumes distributed in West Virginia with a population of 2,000,000 was a more successful campaign than the 310,000 volumes distributed in Virginia with a population of 3,300,000.

Not only was a large distribution made at little more than one-half the cost of providing the books, but because the cost was borne in part by the pastors and churches the distribution was, on the whole, well executed.

The campaign made clearer to pastors the missionary work of the Bible Society and brought forth almost universal expressions of appreciation, even from pastors who did not take part in the campaign.

The campaign secured the acquaintance and co-operation of smaller denominations and an enlargement of their interest in the Bible Society.

THE BIBLE AT THE GERMAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH DAY IN BERLIN *

Oskar Söhngen

WHEN the first German Evangelical Church Day was held in Hannover in 1949, many of those taking part were the most moved by the experience of the great joint Bible studies. No less than 3,000 people had gathered daily in the great domed city hall for Bible study. Such a thing had never before occurred in the history of the evangelical Church in Germany.

It is true that gifted evangelists of the previous century, such as Baron von Kottwitz, Stöcker and Samuel Keller had also set great masses in movement in the large cities. But their appearance had nevertheless always had something of the unusual and sensational about it. In contrast, that which marked out the Church Day in Hannover was the simple way in which people here took it for granted that they should gather daily around the Bible. Nobody had reckoned on that ; hundreds had been expected and thousands came. And there were no outstanding names, with a great power of attraction, which might have acted as a 'magnet' ; these thousands came, because they lived in and with the Bible. Here, for the first time, it became publicly clear that through the Church struggle of the years lying behind us, it had been given to our people to re-discover the Bible. That has perhaps been the greatest blessing of these difficult years, that they have given birth to one of the greatest Bible movements with which God has ever blessed our people. Under the trials of National Socialist pressure the Bible again became a living book to countless numbers ; it broke upon them that Almighty God speaks in the Bible and that in this Book He is speaking to us, to us, the people of the twentieth century and to every individual amongst us. But through this movement with the eternal Word of God they found—in a literal sense—direction for their personal way, for the way of our people and for the way of the Church of Jesus Christ. And this daily direction is what the thousands sought also in the Bible studies of the Church Day.

The Church Day in Essen in 1950 for the first time—differently from Hannover—set masses in movement ; the number of people taking part in Bible study also increased considerably. It was no longer possible to manage with *one* Bible study group, but there had to be several. And each time thousands thronged together to hear an exposition of the Word of God.

But all previous standards and experiences were far surpassed by the Berlin Church Day which left its mark in July of this year on the city of three-and-a-quarter million inhabitants. From the very first it had been planned to have four Bible study groups each day and for this purpose the largest halls had been chosen which were available. In three broadcasting halls Professor Iwand of Göttingen, Professor Martin Fischer of Berlin and the Halle student pastor Hamel dealt on the first day with John 10 : 1-16, " He is the Master " ; the theme of the second day was " We, the brethren " (Luke 22 : 24-30), and the Bible study of the last day, based on John 13 : 1-15, concluded under the title " He is ours." In East Berlin Professor Rendtorff of Kiel was the leader, but it soon became evident that the Werner-Seelenbinder Hall, the largest hall in East Berlin, was not big enough and so a further Bible study group was arranged in the Friedrichstadt-Palast which was led by Probst Staemmler of Wittenberg.

* Extracts from a report published in the first issue of the News Bulletin of the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to say how many people were reached in all. It would therefore be advisable to take a concrete example. In Group III, the subject " Servant of two Masters " was dealt with ; the hall in which the Group met holds 6,000 people. By 9 o'clock already for morning prayers, all seats were occupied. And then at 9.30 all of these 6,000 took part, most of them with Bible in hand, in the Bible study. But these were only a part of those reached. For meetings were also held in two other scarcely smaller halls and carried over into the ante-rooms ; not only was there not a single empty seat in the halls, but thousands and thousands—like the people once in Galilee—either stood or sat in the entrances and listened thoughtfully and concentratedly to the exposition of the Scriptures. It would be no exaggeration to estimate that the number of people listening to the Bible study of Professor Martin Fischer was between 25 and 30,000. It is true that that was probably the best attended Bible study, but the number of those taking part in the other Bible study groups was correspondingly large. Men qualified to judge estimate that on the Saturday evening in West Berlin alone there were over 80,000 people taking part. Who could doubt any longer that during the years which lie behind us God has been doing decisive things in the hearts of our Church members and beyond them in the hearts of our people ?

Of course, a Bible study with an audience of thousands and tens of thousands has its difficulties. In such a case the active co-operation of those present which has become more and more usual, has to be abandoned. It was therefore all the more joyful to find that the leaders of the Bible studies did not allow themselves to be confused by this ; they explained the Bible as simply and clearly as if they were only talking to a small group of people, and they made the thousands and tens of thousands of people feel above all that what they were saying was really worked out from the Scriptures.

GOD IN ACTION—THE STORY OF 1804

WILLIAM J. PLATT

AT the end of the eighteenth century, despite the clouds of war, three important things were happening in North-West Europe. One was the Industrial Revolution, whereby new wealth was liberated by the power of coal and steam. Another was a wide expansion of world horizons in trade and shipping, and the third, at any rate in Britain, was a great religious awakening. As a consequence, during the thirty years from 1790 to 1820, and even in face of the threat of Napoleonic invasion, most of the great British missionary societies were founded—founded upon a new experience of God in action.

B.F.B.S. Third Jubilee

So it comes about that in the year 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was born—marking a turning point in the story of the world circulation of the Christian Gospel. Mass printing by power-driven machinery, the harnessing to the extension of the Kingdom of new wealth, and a glowing experience of God all coincided in that event. It may seem presumptuous that a secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society is reminding his colleagues of other Bible Societies of the story, for no one likes to remind his friends of the date of his own birthday ! But the friendly pages of the U.B.S. BULLETIN make such stories of interest to every member of what is now a world-

wide family of Bible Societies. Moreover, our colleagues of the other Societies have already suggested that the birthday of the B.F.B.S. is of great interest to them, and that to do us honour they desire that the Council of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES should meet in England in the year of our Third Jubilee, 1954.

So that our perspective is not maladjusted, however, let us first remind ourselves that the actual work of 'Bibling' the world did not begin in 1804—it was already on the agenda of the Church when St. Paul changed the history of the world by invading Europe, writing his Epistles and circulating them to the European churches. Its dominant idea was within the Church, even when St. Luke wrote about "taking in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." It was the Church which decided the Canon of Holy Scripture, and throughout the centuries copied the sacred text in its Scriptoria, making it the very centre of its education policy in schools and colleges, so that the translation into Latin (the Vulgate) in "its language no less than its substance saturates all European literature."*

The Work of the Church

We can therefore say that the kind of work which the Bible Societies are doing to-day sprang spontaneously from the heart of the Church, and that it came about without overmuch planned organisation, and without awaiting any major decisions of a Church council. It came, too, from an undivided Church as part of the command to "disciple all nations." In the early Syriac, Coptic, Latin and other versions of the Gospel, the Church was already showing its sense of strategic missionary endeavour in the world.

It may even be said that before Christianity was born, the work had begun, for the greatest piece of translation which the ancient world knew was the translation of the Old Testament into Greek—the Septuagint—undertaken not in Asia or Europe, but in Africa.

A New Era

Nevertheless from 1804 onwards a new era began, for there is a rapid rise, both in the world circulation of the Scriptures and in the translation of them. New languages came into man's ken, new production methods were available, and new resources could be tapped. For example, in the first eighteen centuries of the Christian era, as far as we can trace, Scriptures in whole or in part had been translated into 72 languages. In 1951 they have been translated into 1,130, of which the B.F.B.S. has circulated 808. This bursting forth of God's revelation of His love to men, this widespread dissemination of the knowledge of the only way for the settlement of man's relationship with his fellow-men, is therefore worthy of a great commemoration, for it has already had and will in future have a profound effect on world history. Slowly but surely a silent revolution in the uplifting of the conscience of mankind has taken place. We remember Sun Yat Sen's remark about Morrison's translation of the Bible being the starting point for the awakening of the quarter of the human race which lives in China. We compare the words of Livingstone about the African churches in Angola, which had died because they had no vernacular Bible, with the survival of the persecuted church of Madagascar with a translated Bible. We think of the freeing of the slaves through Wilberforce, converted by Bible reading, or in our days of the life of

* "The Legacy of Rome," p. 337, Sir R. W. Livingstone.

Mahatma Gandhi, deeply affected by the story of Jesus which he found in his pocket New Testament. We recall the resistance in Germany or Norway to dictatorship, so mightily strengthened by Bible reading.

Celebrating 1804

In face of such things, our first duty in celebrating 1804 is to renew our acquaintance with the message we circulate : the need is for rededication, renewal, to awaken our national churches to the dynamic quality of the Book we circulate. Do any of our Bible Societies still lack a world horizon ? With literacy growing in the world, surely none of us can be satisfied with just nation-wide circulation of the Gospel. Whether we desire it or not we are all world citizens to-day, and under God we must struggle to mould world events on Christ's pattern.

Let us also recall our resources in the Bible. "Nearly all the renewals and moral reforms within Christianity have sprung from the re-discovery of Scripture" wrote Bishop Barry.* "Apart from the living springs of the New Testament, the institutional life of Christianity becomes a petrified ecclesiasticism." He asks, "What can it avail to have a life of whose character we are left in ignorance ?" So, in addition to its Third Jubilee celebrations in large meetings and commemorations, the B.F.B.S. is hoping, through the churches, to recall British people—within and without the Church—to a spiritual life deepened by more Bible study and expository preaching. From the second Sunday in Advent in December, 1953, to December, 1954, we shall celebrate a Bible Year, under the title of "The Bible and Life."

In a New Age

Bible Society work in England is supported by thousands of town groups and village groups of Christian people. After 1804 they grew up spontaneously, and are still self-governing. To take one example : in 1811 such an 'Auxiliary' was formed at Norwich in the eastern counties—where as yet not even a railway had arrived ! The citizens of Norwich lacked modern technology and facilities, but look at their spirit ! Here is Joseph Gurney, a grand old Quaker, who attended the meeting. He writes : "The Mayor of the town looked magnificent with his gold chain. He presided at the first meeting. The Anglican Bishop was there, and he proposed and I seconded the proposal for a local Bible Society Auxiliary Committee. We had a perfect harmonious mixture of High Church, Low Church, Lutheran, Baptist, Quaker. It was a time which seemed to pull down all barriers of distinction and to melt us all into one common Christianity." That event was typical of hundreds of others. In all our lands the Bible ought to be a common concern of every Christian communion.

But that was in 1811. From many of our English Auxiliaries that adventuring spirit has unfortunately departed. The fellowship is there and the loyalty, but many have ceased to experiment. Their gifts to us remain stationary, when our headquarters' production costs have risen by 250 per cent., and world needs expand. So, in 1954, we are endeavouring to recover our youth. By conferences, visual aids, visits to colleges and schools, we shall try to "break new ground"—to intensify our efforts to interest more Christians, to get younger people interested, and by literature about our work to increase the annual gifts of our people by 50 per cent.

* "The Relevance of Christianity."

Will our colleagues of the other Bible Societies pray for us? If their own Bible Societies are in any way moribund or non-missionary, cannot they join with us in a crusade to deepen and increase the work of sending the Gospel to everyone, where he is, at a price he can pay, in his own tongue? The mother Society of them all invites them to rejoice in one hundred and fifty years of Christian world service and to take an ever increasing share in an expanding world.

Laymen and Women

Professor K. S. Latourette tells us* that "The efforts for co-operation and the Ecumenical Movement came not primarily from the laity but from the clergy." But in this work we must get the laity in. The B.F.B.S. was founded primarily by laity, and it is an ecumenical movement of the first order. The criticism of the Amsterdam Conference was that in its representation it lacked laity. It is of the essence of our work that laity read the Bible for themselves, and that they help to circulate it!

Our 1954 Third Jubilee, then, will aim at deepening the spiritual life of England by re-study of Scripture, and at a strengthening of our Bible Society work by spreading the knowledge of it amongst clergy and laity, and of course by raising larger funds for it. All these plans are already accepted by our Sister Societies in the British Dominions, on whose help we in London count to carry on this world work in 800 languages.

In the great cities of Britain we shall hold large meetings of celebration, exhibitions and lectures. Could not our sister Societies do the same in their own lands? More than any celebration we must launch a *movement* of rededication to the truths concerning man's life and destiny committed to us in the Gospel. Only so can we answer the crisis in the soul of man, the challenge of other dogmas. Only so can we survive. "That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, ... for he is thy *life* . . . . ." (Deuteronomy 3:20.).

* "A History of the Expansion of Christianity."

HOW TO PRESENT THE BIBLE

UNDER this title, Mr. JEAN BLUMENTHAL, Secretary of the French Bible Committee, introduced one of the main subjects discussed at the U.B.S. Regional Conference in Nancy last September. We reproduce here some sections of Mr. Blumenthal's paper.

After having stressed that the way in which Bibles are set and presented is a very concrete but essential aspect of the work of the Bible Societies, and that the discussion on this subject should lead to some recommendations of a practical nature, M. Blumenthal recalled rapidly the enormous Bibles of the past—a text which was often accompanied by ample commentaries—read in the family, rare and costly. Then came the impulse given to the distribution of the Bible by the creation of the Bible Societies and the increasing variety of sizes and kinds of Bible made available to the public.

"Abroad, as in France, it was during the first quarter of the nineteenth century that the question of the apocryphal books arose, which roused spirits and was even the cause of a schism at the centre of Bible work in our country. Most of the Bibles used in France up to that time included these books. But the partisans for their removal gained ground and since that time the Protes-

tant editions produced in France no longer include the apocrypha. This is, however, still published separately by the Protestant Bible Society of Paris. Without doubting for one moment the value of the reasons which led our theologians to adopt this attitude, it must be acknowledged that it has given support to the argument of certain Roman Catholic circles, who do not hesitate to impress upon those who have not been warned that the Protestant Bible is an abridged Bible.

" Besides the numerous traditional editions of the Scriptures in French which have been printed, either abroad or in France, we would draw attention to some attempts, sometimes very daring, which have been made in the course of the last 50 years with a view to making the Word of God more accessible to those elements of the population which are outside of our churches : The Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Philippians published in phonetic language by Paul Passy ; the Bible anthology of Chollet ; Jesus of Nazareth, a harmony of the Gospels by Alexandre Westphal ; the Gospel in the form of a newspaper in five columns ; the New Testament by Faivre ; the paper-bound New Testament edited by Grasset and published by the Bible Society of France ; the Family and Youth Bible published by the Protestant Bible Society of Paris ; and the numerous extracts of Bible texts such as 'Perles et Joyaux de l'Ecriture Sainte,' published by the Bible Society of France. Although several of these editions may have known real success, it must also be recognised that some of them brought upon their authors criticisms which were sometimes justifiable. However that may be, an effort has been made to make popular the message of the Gospel.

" Where are we to-day and how does the problem of the presentation of the Bible present itself in our day ? It seems to me that there are two essential factors which should be considered by the societies publishing the Bible :

1. The meeting of present needs ;
2. The creating of need where it has not manifested itself (that is to say, the stirring up of a desire to acquire the Bible and to read it)."

The present needs are first of all the needs of the churches : wedding Bibles to be given to newly-wed couples. Should these be in a large size, as in the past ? Should the present tendency which seeks to reduce the dimensions be followed ? New Testaments for catechumens, which the church would give to them at confirmation. To-day many churches prefer to give a complete Bible to young people at the beginning of their course of religious instruction, so that they may learn how to use it. Should one custom be encouraged rather than another ? Then there are the needs of the members of the churches : reference Bibles, interleaved Bibles, thumb-index Bibles, on good quality paper, with clear print (during the past 30 years the average sight of the people seems to have considerably deteriorated), Bibles with large print, Bibles for people with bad sight, Scriptures in Braille for the use of the blind. And for children there are requests for illustrated books of Bible stories as well as for illustrated New Testaments and Bibles. In France there are no organisations, such as there are in the anglo-saxon countries, which specialise in such publications : should the Bible Societies make up for this lack ?

" So much for the Christians who know what the Bible is and are already living in more or less close contact with some church circle. But now we must consider the second factor which I mentioned above, namely the necessity for *creating a need to know the Bible* amongst those who have not yet been in contact with it.

" Yesterday we saw various methods of contact. Now we must consider what form of presentation of the Bible will facilitate this contact . . . . .

" The first problem is that of the *text*. You will be hearing shortly about the text of the Bible. I will therefore limit myself to echoing the opinion of those who quite rightly say that, in order that the people should be able to read the Bible, the Bible should be expressed in a language which they understand. Either the text should be given in the language of to-day, or explanations of terms (names of people, of objects, of measures, of places, etc. . . . .) should be added to facilitate the understanding of the text.

" Some people think that it is necessary to include a general introduction at the beginning of the Bible which will guide the reader, and will help to prevent him from losing himself in texts which may appear to him hermetically sealed, which he is not yet ready to understand and which may discourage him. Others would like, besides a general introduction an introduction to each book or group of books, placing it in its historical and religious setting. Yet others would like the Bible also to contain analytical, chronological and analogical tables, concordances and a glossary, as is the case with certain English and German Bibles published in the past.

" This question of notes and commentaries has always raised a large question mark for our Bible Societies and most of them, anxious above all to avoid that their Bibles should be classified as tendencious, have limited themselves to publishing Bibles which contain a few explanatory notes, but no commentary or note of a dogmatic nature. At the very most, they have allowed themselves to publish a few tracts which have as their immediate object to incite the reader to procure and read the Bible. Although appreciated by most of those who distribute the Bible and who use them in their work, these tracts have been considered by some as ' too much this ' or ' not enough that,' which proves how difficult it is for a Bible Society to undertake to publish other literature, while remaining available in the service of all.

"Apart from the text itself, there is the *typography* of the text. This question, whose importance I have already stressed, is not limited to a choice of particular types. Certain Bibles, such as for instance the editions of the German Luther Bible, make the essential passages of certain paragraphs stand out in heavy type. There are also editions of the New Testament with passages underlined in colour and with signs in the margin, drawing attention to a particular passage. Is it desirable to channel the attention of the reader in this way?

"Another problem : that of the paragraph headings which, moreover, is not limited to a question of typography, but even touches on interpretation. Thus our attention was recently drawn to the reactions which the sub-headings for chapters 9 to 11 of the Epistle to the Romans, such as they are given in certain versions, may provoke among Jewish groups which one is seeking to evangelise.

" In a country with a Roman Catholic majority, like France, we have to remember that those we are trying to reach are often people who, from their early youth, have been to catechism and have perhaps been given a missel at their first communion. After that they have abandoned a religion, certain aspects of which have deceived them, and they are ready to be convinced that the Word of God can, alone, reveal to them the religion which does not deceive. But then, on opening the Bible, they find the same typographical set-up, the traditional double columns to which we are so accustomed, and which very

often make them draw the conclusion in their own thoughts that, after all, it is the same thing—the Bible is the Protestant missel ! . . . . .

" Before speaking of the matter of the cover, may I be permitted to stress also how important it is that the man to whom one presents a Gospel, a New Testament, or a Bible for the first time, should not find in it, on the first page, an indication that it has come from abroad. Only too easily he will conclude that the Bible is a ' foreign book ' which does not concern him. While expressing all the gratitude which our country owes to our friends of the British and American Bible Societies for their support which is indispensable to us and without which we should be quite incapable of meeting the needs, we would beg them to help us to produce ever more editions in France so that we are not obliged to comply with the customs regulations, whereby an indication of the country of origin has to be given on the bottom of the title page of volumes imported from abroad.

"And now the problem of the *cover*. How can an exterior presentation be found which is sufficiently attractive and which is nevertheless quiet, solid and cheap ? This problem of the exterior presentation applies not only for colportage, but also for sales through the normal book-trade which could be developed in our country.

" We feel that it is necessary to have Bibles which are well bound, a Bible with paper covers being far too fragile. The binding should either be in stiff boards for an ordinary book, or soft for an edition on India paper. Instead of keeping to the traditional black, there should be a choice of colours in good taste and blood-red edges should be avoided. New plastic materials now make it possible to have bindings which will stand up to every test, which look like leather and the price of which is barely above that of board bindings.

" The use of an illustrated paper jacket, attractively presented, has facilitated sales to the general public. In France we started this about 15 years ago at the Universal Exhibition, where the Bible was for sale on several stands. The jacket bore a reminder of this event. But after the exhibition was over, our colporteurs continued to ask for these jackets, so that we had some reprinted for circulation needs.

" Two years ago, wishing to attempt a special effort amongst booksellers, we studied the question of presenting the Bible in a paper jacket of more modern design, illustrated by photographs representing the various races and showing the life of peoples from very varied countries, together with the reproduction of passages in particularly unusual forms of typography. The inside flap of the jacket had a short notice printed on it, explaining what the Bible is, and giving a few indications about its circulation throughout the world. At the same time as this jacket was produced, we published a small poster, showing the Bible in its new presentation and, by means of special publicity through their professional publication, we reached the main booksellers of the country. Two weeks after the appearance of this issue, we had received orders from more than 300 of them and since then, some thirty have continued to draw supplies from us regularly. It is quiet certain that without this special effort at presentation, which allows the Bible to bear comparison with other books on show in booksellers' windows, the latter would hardly be interested in selling it.

" But there is not only the question of the presentation of the Bible, but also that of the New Testament and of other portions of the Bible. In this connection we must mention the success, not only in France, but also in a good

number of other countries, of the presentation of the Gospel in illustrated magazine format, with the particular idea of reaching the general public. As far as we are concerned, a first edition of 35,000 copies in our country, has been almost exhausted and we have just published a second edition of this Gospel with 60,000 copies . . . . .

" I will not prolong any further this simple exposition of a problem which would seem to be important and which we have perhaps neglected too much up to the present. In expressing frankly these few remarks, criticisms and suggestions, it has simply been my desire to report the opinion of various people who circulate the Bible, with whom I have been in contact for some twenty years already and to underline those points on which the discussion which is to follow can be based.

" We now need to know how to strip ourselves of any preconceived ideas, which a long past of religious life and ecclesiastical tradition has perhaps stamped on us, in order to see things with new eyes and to put ourselves in the place of those to whom we wish to take the Bible so as to be able to understand their reactions. It is in the measure in which we know how to make this effort that our discussions will enable us to find the most effective means of making the Word of God better known to men. May He direct us in this common search."

THE BIBLE SOCIETY IN CANADA

WILLIAM H. HUDSPETH

IT is seldom realised that Canada is the largest country in the Western Hemisphere, the third largest in the world. Canada covers almost half a continent, and includes the extensive northern archipelago which extends practically to the Pole. The total area—more than 3,500,000 square miles—is almost equal to that of the whole of Europe.

Halifax on the Atlantic coast of Canada is closer to London, England, than to Vancouver on the Pacific coast. From east to west the boundary with the United States verges on 4,000 miles in length. From north to south Canada extends nearly 3,000 miles—from the polar regions to the latitude of the Mediterranean.

The greater part of this vast territory is sparsely inhabited, settlement being governed chiefly by soil and climate. At present it is roughly the southern quarter of Canada which is capable of supporting a stable population. While certain important productive activities extend far northward, all areas of dense population lie within 200 miles of the United States border

Politically, Canada is divided into ten provinces and two territories. These are grouped as follows : Newfoundland ; the Maritime Provinces, on the Atlantic seaboard—Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The Central Provinces—Quebec and Ontario. The Prairie Provinces, spanning the western, wheat growing prairies—Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. British Columbia, a single province, embraces the entire Canadian Pacific seaboard, almost the whole of the western mountain system and the islands along the coast. North of the provinces are the Yukon and Northwest Territories. In Ontario there are three Bible Houses, two in Quebec, two in Saskatchewan, two in Alberta, and one in each of the other provinces. In all

there are sixteen autonomous Auxiliaries comprising over three thousand branches.

Amongst many lovely features of Canadian life are the people's loyalty to the Throne and the Auxiliaries' affection for and devotion to the Parent Society. At weekly Rotary, Kiwanis and Empire Club luncheons the King is toasted—not in wine but in coffee or water—and the National Anthem is sung ; and no important hockey match is opened without the playing of the National Anthem. Ties of mutual friendship have united the Auxiliaries with the London Committee for more than a century, while with the passing of the years the bonds grow stronger. Canada is deeply interested in the world-wide work of the Society.

Many post-war difficulties have been faced and in large measure overcome. They are similar to those in England—steeply rising costs, inflationary tendencies and the fact that each denomination has had to raise considerably more money than before World War II. People's first loyalty seems to be to their denomination whether United Church, Anglican, Baptist or Presbyterian. During the conflict large sums of money were raised to assist the Parent Society. Most of the reserves of the Upper Canada Bible Society, surely the largest Auxiliary in the world, were put into general contributions and it was hoped that after the war there would be less demands, whereas, on the contrary, world needs have become more insistent. Happily the annual income has been sustained and there have been new developments :

(*a*) Two additional district secretaries have been appointed, one to Northern Ontario with an area equal to that of France, and one to Cape Breton Island. This secretary, who is also responsible for Newfoundland, travels over an area equal to that of nine-tenths of England. The reader needs to use his imagination only momentarily to realise the labour entailed by touring and speaking throughout such immense spaces.

(*b*) Audio-visual aids have been extensively developed. Each secretary has a projector, and the necessary films, film strips or two-by-two colour slides have to be provided. Three of the Auxiliaries possess Gospel motor-vans by means of which colporteurs visit outlying, scattered farmsteads, lumber camps and thinly inhabited districts.

(*c*) During the year a nation-wide essay competition was introduced when competitors between the ages of 15 to 17 were requested to write a short composition on either, " Why a knowledge of the Bible is a necessary part of a sound education," or " What the Bible has done for human progress." Provincial prizes and a nation-wide prize were given, the cost of these being defrayed by a generous Montreal layman. In this way Bible Society funds were not encroached upon.

(*d*) A ladies' Bible Class in Toronto, composed of women and girls who all work for their livelihood, raised $5,000 (at the present rate of exchange £1,660) to meet the cost of printing the New Testament in Bassa of Cameroon.

(*e*) In one Bible House, which in addition to circulating the Scriptures, sells carefully chosen Christian literature, there was a turnover last year of $76,000, say £25,300.

(*f*) A Jubilee Advance Programme has been initiated whereby, in addition to recalling people to a renewed reading and study of the Bible, it is hoped to raise a special fund of $300,000. At the same time the Auxiliaries aim to advance their regular annual contributions.

Canada is a young, great, industrially-expanding, wealthy country and on this account she needs your prayers and understanding. Abundant food, smart clothes, large cars do not necessarily go hand in hand with righteousness. Our Lord observed that " It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." As it is with an individual, so it is with a nation. Happily the country has many talented Christian leaders who, well aware of the shoals and rocks, keep their eyes on the chart and navigate skillfully and bravely. Let our earnest prayers encircle these men so that some future historian might write of them that they

> " kept right on the strenuous uphill road,
> Strong to the end, above complaint and boast."

THE THURINGIAN BIBLE SOCIETY ALTENBURG

WALTER ZIMMERMANN

THE Thuringian Bible Society, Altenburg, was founded in 1852 as the "Altenburg State Bible Society." But the archives of the State Bible Society show that it had two predecessors: a Bible Society in the province of Altenburg which was about thirty years older, and a " Bible legacy fund " which went back a further hundred years to about 1740.

The Altenburg Bible Society was originally a Society producing its own Scriptures. But as the British and Foreign Bible Society and later the Stuttgart Bible Society gained position in Germany through their good and cheap editions, the Altenburg Bible Society joined with these and procured its Scriptures from them. So, for many decades, the Society has been linked in brotherly trust and in close co-operation with the Stuttgart Bible Society. Tens of thousands of copies printed by the Stuttgart Bible Society were sold during the course of these years.

After the end of the war, in 1945, the greatest difficulties arose. The country was devoid of Bibles, for during the years of National Socialism Bible printing had been more and more restricted and during the war years it had been completely stopped. Many refugees from the East had lost their Bibles ; there were none available for young people. While the West recovered more quickly because the very active Stuttgart Bible Society resumed its work with great energy, in spite of all the damage it had suffered, there was nobody in the East who could print there. Even the important Prussian Main Bible Society in Berlin had not begun printing again. Funds were exhausted, paper was unobtainable, printing licences were not granted. The import of Bibles from western Germany was almost impossible, on account of the zonal boundary, especially after two different currencies had been introduced.

Soon after the end of the war, the Altenburg Bible Society began to take up printing activity. Already in May, 1945, 2,500,000 Bible text cards were printed first of all on cheap card, and then a Bible text weekly calendar. The returns of sales from these two made it possible to begin one of the most important tasks, namely the provision for the two million evangelical young people in the East of a Scripture book entitled " Christian Teaching." This book, which contains parts of the Bible, parts of the hymn book and other instructional texts will shortly appear in a newly revised edition of 400 pages in the third hundred thousand copies.

But with the increasing difficulties, the help from friends in the West and all over the world was very vigorous. The Stuttgart Bible Society allowed

a whole number of its most valuable editions to be printed under the printing licence of the Bible Society in Altenburg, without making any charge: their concordance, Bible reference book, a number of Scripture text booklets, their pocket Bible and a New Testament, amongst others. This was a great sacrifice, but no other way could have been found to supply the East with Bibles. In this way hundreds of thousands of Bibles and Bible portions have reached the hands of Church members. The need for Bibles is so great, that about 100,000 copies were sold in a few months, without the need being covered.

We can say that the country is thirsty for the Word of God, like the desert for rain. Since the Saxony Main Bible Society has not yet been able to resume its printing activity for technical reasons, the Altenburg Bible Society has taken over the supplying of the Lutheran churches in the East with some seven million members.

A particularly effective method of missionary work among the people has been made possible by the illustrated Bible portions in magazine format, of which the second is now in preparation, after tens of thousands of copies of the first had been sold in a few weeks. This is a valuable complement to the excellent Bible editions of the Stuttgart Bible Society with commentaries, concordances and new translations, most of which pass into the hands of faithful Bible readers, and to the critical editions of the Bible for pastors and students.

The work could not have been carried out without the help of friends abroad who have been untiring in their efforts to send paper and binding materials. Here, the United Bible Societies has helped very extensively at a point where help is most necessary. However things may develop in the future, the greatest need has been covered. If it is possible to carry out the programme planned for the next few months, which for the Altenburg Bible Society involves the printing of 150,000 Bibles, 125,000 New Testaments, 350,000 Portions and 100,000 Scripture books, the dearth of Bibles in the East will have been covered.

Nobody can imagine what difficulties have to be overcome with such plans. But it would have been quite impossible to have done what has been achieved without the faithful, unselfish and continuing help of friends. So our thanks go out to the United Bible Societies across land and sea, to the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany and not least to our friends in Stuttgart, who have all had a share in the achievements. May God grant unhindered continuation of the work.

THE LITERACY SITUATION IN THE BELGIAN CONGO

H. Wakelin Coxill

WHEREVER Christian missions have gone in the Belgian Congo since the arrival of the first Protestant missionaries early in 1878, they have founded schools. From the earliest days the primary object was to enable the people of Central Africa to read God's Word in their own mother tongue. With the aid of many devoted Africans, pioneer missionaries set about reducing the Congo languages to writing, preparing dictionaries and translating the Scriptures. The complete Bible is now available in eight Congo dialects and the New Testament has been translated and published in thirty-two; the oldest translation dating from 1905.

The Belgian Government has, from a very small beginning in 1890, encouraged education. The first primary schools organised by the State were opened in 1906. Roman Catholic schools also date from about this same year. These Roman Catholic schools were early subsidised and encouraged by the Government and by 1920 there were nine official schools with 1,860 scholars and 121 subsidised Roman Catholic schools with 20,310 scholars. The number of Protestant schools and scholars at that time was even larger and their numbers, value and importance increased year by year despite the fact that they were not State aided in any way.

The Belgian Government believes firmly in the necessity of a Christian basis for education and for the new civilisation which is advancing so rapidly in her Colony and, from 1948, has subsidised and encouraged the Protestant missions as well as the Roman Catholic ones in their educational work, provided they comply with certain conditions and follow the wisely conceived new Government educational programme which was elaborated at that time. Missions are not compelled to comply with these requirements and receive State aid but most of them realise that it is in the best interests of their work and of the people of the Congo that they do.

It is the present policy of the Government that most of the educational establishments in the Colony shall be run by the missions with Government support. Absolute freedom is allowed each mission for Bible or Christian teaching and even in the few lay Government schools, such as the medical ones, opportunities are given for both Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries to give what religious instruction they care to their followers among the students.

There is no compulsory education in the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, yet almost all the schools are full to overflowing. An exception to this rule is to be found in the Colonial Army where all native soldiers have to attend classes. Special classes are also run by the Social Services for the wives of soldiers so that they too at least know how to read. Many of the big Companies arrange special classes for their African employees and their families.

It is estimated that more than 50% of the children of school-going age within the entire Colony are now attending school regularly. This is the more remarkable when it is remembered that it is still very difficult in many districts to get girls to attend school.

In 1950, there were 28,204 schools teaching 970,343 children of whom 895,375 were in primary schools. Of the total :

6,112 children were in 36 official Government schools ;
479,651 were in 9,354 State subsidised Protestant and Roman Catholic mission schools ;
138,850 were in 7,703 non-subsidised Roman Catholic schools ;
297,638 were in 10,598 non-subsidised Protestant schools ;
48,092 were in 513 Company schools.

(These figures do not include schools for white children.)

No figures are available to show just how many Congo natives become literate each year. Many regularly attending school have long known how to read while others, by modern methods, often learn to read in three or four months. By dividing the total number of those attending school by seven we get 190,000 which is, perhaps, an approximate answer to this question.

Adult education is given by many of the missions and is now encouraged by the Belgian Government. Many of the Protestant missions have, for many

years, only accepted into Church membership those who could read God's Word for themselves and, as has already been shown, adult education is provided in the Army and by many of the companies. The Belgian Government, in order to further adult education where possible, is willing to subsidise adult schools where there are classes of at least 15 persons provided the school is open for 30 weeks during the year, giving lessons of 4 hours per week to the illiterate and of at least 3 hours per week to the semi-literate.

In teaching reading, the sentence method has been used for more than 20 years in most of the Protestant mission schools. Dr. Laubach first visited Congo in 1948 and his method is now being used with encouraging results in many places in four of the most important of the Congo dialects : Lingala, Kikongo, Otetela and, more recently, in Kingwana. Lingala is not only the lingua-franca used widely up and down the Congo River but it is also the language used by the Colonial Army, and the Laubach method is now being used with great success and appreciation in the schools for soldiers and their wives.

Apart from the Bible, the New Testament, Pilgrim's Progress, the Harmony of the Gospels and a number of school books and readers, there is still very little literature available in Congo languages. The preparation, publication and distribution of good literature is one of the urgent needs of to-day and the big union bookshop and press, La Librairie Evangélique du Congo (LECO) at Léopoldville, and the many mission presses throughout the Congo cannot keep pace with the growing demand. As more and more Africans come to know French, so the wealth of literature in that language is opened to them but, even so, there is a pressing need for literature that is truly African and written for Africans to serve the fast awakening and rapidly developing peoples of that great Continent.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA

HOMER WILSON

IN this short report I am not concerned with formal standardised schools recognised by the Government, but rather the non-standardised church schools of Ethiopia. Those of us who have had an opportunity to observe these have been amazed at what they have accomplished for the spread of the Gospel and (from an educational point of view) literacy.

Schools are held in local churches for the children (or older people who are interested) of that community. These schools start at day-break each week-day and continue for about an hour or an hour and a half. In this way they fit into the community and home schedule and the children herd the cattle, etc., as usual. These schools have a two-fold aim : (*a*) to teach the alphabet, e.g. reading and (*b*) an introduction of the Gospel to the unsaved through memorising Bible verses and reading the Scriptures.

The only equipment used in a school of this sort is an alphabet card and a small booklet with the alphabet and numbers in the front followed by passages from the Scripture, such as the Lord's Prayer, John 3:16, the story of the prodigal son, etc.

The teacher in such a school may be the local elder or someone else appointed by the church. Usually this man has not had the advantage of formal schooling. In former days he attended a similar school and by

continued self-application has attained a fair degree of aptitude in reading and writing.

Schools are also held in non-Christian (Moslem, pagan) communities. These are always in response to an invitation of an individual who offers his home for the use of the teacher. The teacher is appointed by the church and usually stays in such a home for one month. The school is carried on exactly as the others with the same equipment. This, of course, gives the teacher-evangelist much time for personal work and so on. Schools of this type have been one of the chief instruments in the spread of the Gospel in Ethiopia.

The writer does not have exact figures but there are a minimum of 300 churches which hold schools for at least short periods each year. In addition to this, evangelist-teachers are going out into unreached areas and using schools such as these described above as means of contacting the pagan or Moslem peoples. There are twenty evangelist-teachers in one district alone. Others with which the writer is not so familiar are being reached in a similar manner.

The writer believes that the simple, primitive school described in this report will continue to have a great influence in spreading the Gospel and literacy in Ethiopia.

NEWS FROM ALL THE WORLD

Under this heading we do not intend to give only information of the Bible Societies, but we also want to include such facts as may or should have a bearing on Bible Society work. This information should therefore not only tell us what other Societies are doing, but should also help us to apprehend the whole realm of our common responsibilities and should lead us to think out how best we may extend our own activity in the future, in such a way as to fulfil our calling to the utmost.

Argentina

CIRCULATION figures for the last working year of the Bible Society agency (November, 1950 to October, 1951) amount to some 850,000 copies of Scripture, the highest figure reached so far.

Contributions from local churches and individuals have risen from pesos 54,000 in 1950 to pesos 87,000 (£2,200) this year.

Brazil

The evangelical population in Brazil doubled between 1940 and 1950, according to the last census. The increase in the total population of the country during the same period was 23%. There are about 50 million Roman Catholics and 2 million evangelicals in Brazil.

Belgium

With the help of the American Bible Society and of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the *Belgian Bible Society* has appointed for an experimental period a Bible traveller who will visit all the bookshops of any importance in Belgium and France. Up to the present, the commercial book-trade in these two countries has shown very little interest in selling the Bible.

Egypt

Owing to the present circumstances, the work of the joint agency of the British and American Bible Societies is meeting with many difficulties. In a letter dated at the end of October, the agent Mr. Geary, wrote as follows :

" I do value, however, the prayerful thoughts of yourself and the many friends in Bible House. Well might one say ' join the Bible Society and see the world ! ' There is never a dull moment. Despite all the unrest, the sales of Scriptures are going on and this year will provide a greater circulation figure for the agency than has taken place in any of the five years that I have been out here. The final figure will be around 180,000 volumes for this agency, when we close our books at the end of this month. 90,000 of these Scriptures will have been distributed in Egypt, the majority of them being in Arabic. From actual statistics which I have been able to keep, I have discovered that one out of every four Arabic Bibles circulated in Egypt is purchased by Moslems.

" There are 22 million inhabitants in Egypt, of which only 15% are literate, that is approximately 3,300,000. Of the 90,000 Scriptures circulated, it follows that one out of every thirty-six persons in Egypt who can read this year possessed some portion of the Word of God. At least, this can be one of the suppositions."

England

Publishers of Bibles have reported that the sale of Bibles has been exceptionally good for the past few years. They predict that 1951 will be an even better year than 1950. Cambridge University Press, for instance, says that 1950 was its best Bible year since 1935.

*

The Publishers' Association have issued a chart which shows how the cost of book production in Britain has increased from 1939 to the present time. The cost of paper is the biggest individual item ; it is almost 500% higher, binding is 250% higher, and printing 150% higher to-day than in 1939. To this, additional transport charges have also to be added.

*

An inscribed copy of the first edition of the Bible in Fang has been presented by the *British and Foreign Bible Society* to Dr. Albert Schweitzer, whose activity has been primarily devoted to the Fang people.

The B.F.B.S. has also sent a specially bound copy of the Bible to the Legislative Assembly of the Gold Coast, on the occasion of its first meeting.

An inscribed copy of the first edition of the Luba-Katanga Bible has also been presented to the King of the Belgians. This edition has been published by the B.F.B.S. and the presentation is being made in the name and on behalf of the editing Society by Pastor J. Harts, secretary of the Belgian Bible Society and the Rev. W. Coxhill of the Congo Missionary Council.

*

The Rev. J. T. Watson, Assistant General Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London, left for an extended tour of Equatorial Africa at the end of December. His visit should allow the Bible Society to draw up its future policy for supplying the increasing need for Scriptures in that part of the world.

*

In connection with the new printing of Braille Scriptures for overseas which the B.F.B.S. has recently undertaken, the manuscript of St. John in Burmese Braille was recently received at Bible House, and work will commence shortly. The manuscripts of St. Matthew and St. Luke in Burmese are now being prepared.

During the first 10 months of 1951 Scripture production by the British and Foreign Bible Society in London alone, together with comparative figures for the years 1949 and 1950, was as follows :

	1949	1950	1951 (ten months)
Bibles	1,072,852	1,074,031	1,280,297
New Testaments	581,795	773,451	626,240
Gospels	744,852	807,007	1,448,414

*

During the first 10 months of 1951 the British and Foreign Bible Society has printed more *new* publications of the Scriptures than in any previous year.

Three new Bibles have been completed : the Fang Bible (French Equatorial Africa) ; the Luba-Katanga (Belgian Congo) ; and the Sekedi (North Transvaal). It is hoped that a fourth may be ready before the end of the year—the Shan Bible (Burma).

Three New Testaments have appeared : Moru (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan) ; Nyemwezi (Tanganyika) ; and Kirundi (between Victoria Nyanza and Lake Tanganyika). Four others will probably be ready before the end of the year : Baya: Mbere (French Equatorial Africa) ; Dyak : Sea (Sarawak) ; Bassa of Cameroon (S. W. Cameroon) ; Giryama (Mombassa).

The complete old Testament in Kikuyu has been distributed in Kenya for the first time. The New Testament appeared in 1903.

In addition to these, there have been 15 single Gospels in languages ranging from the New Hebrides to Angola and the Belgian Congo. All these are first translations, with one exception, which was an edition of the Acts, a diglot production in Ancient and Modern Greek, a special edition for the centenary celebrations in Athens in honour of the 1900th anniversary of St. Paul's landing in Europe.

Ethiopia

The installation of a tape-recorder public address apparatus in the Bible House in Addis Ababa is under consideration. A loud speaker will be fitted at each of the two depôt windows and the tape-recorder will provide continuous readings from the Amharic Scriptures for a two-hour programme which can be repeated indefinitely. The sound volume will be kept at a level sufficient for two or three people standing by the window to hear the reading clearly. The plan will be put into effect as soon as the approval of the Archbishop of the Coptic Church can be secured.

*

The Rev. L. D. Ashley, agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Addis Ababa, has been touring Eritrea and the Somalilands, two countries which have so far been 'closed' to Bible Society work.

Finland

The *Finnish Bible Society* will celebrate its 140th anniversary on Palm Sunday this year. The Society is proposing to distribute Scriptures to a value of up to 1 million Finnish marks free of charge to needy people and families.

For the same occasion the Finnish Bible Society is preparing a new edition of the Finnish Bible which will be the cheapest Bible offered on the Finnish market, and is mainly intended for school children.

*

The new Archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, Archbishop Ilmari Salomies, D.D., is also the new chairman of the Finnish Bible Society in succession to the late Archbishop Lehtonen.

Formosa

General Chiang Kai Shek has extended to the Pocket Testament League in New York a hearty invitation to distribute Chinese Gospels and Testaments to members of his Armed Forces and to the civilian population of Formosa. The Pocket Testament League plans to distribute at least a million Gospels and Testaments in Formosa.

*

Missionaries of the Evangelical Alliance Mission at work among Mongols in Formosa report that in the last school semester they began to teach the Bible in English at the Chinese Army Middle School in Fengshan. Most of the students are children of army officers who have had very little previous opportunity of entering into contact with the Word of God.

English Bible classes have also been conducted among Chinese in Pingtung at the local Mandarin schools and the Reserve Officers' Unit.

France

The chaplain of the German soldiers in French prisons informed the Stuttgart Bible Society that there was such a great need for Bibles among the prisoners as he had not found elsewhere. To a former S.S. officer who was once right outside of the Church, and now facing death, the question of salvation had become so decisive that he was waiting with great longing for a New Testament.

Germany

In January, 1949, the General Synod of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (V.E.L.K.D.) decided to work out a new form of liturgy. A special committee was appointed which first studied which translation of the Bible should be used for the reading of the Sunday Epistle and Gospel in the Liturgy. The committee considered that none of the available texts was satisfactory and began to work on a new revision of the Luther text. The following principles were followed in that effort :

(1) The Luther text was changed where Luther's Greek or Hebrew text was obviously based on a false text, or where Luther had obviously wrongly translated.

(2) The Luther Bible is more for reading aloud than for reading silently. That is to say Luther translated with the reading aloud of the text in a service

in mind. He therefore gave great care to the tonal expression and the rhythm as being essential parts of the language. This means, for instance, that the letter *e* in final syllables must be retained very much more often for the sake of the rhythm than has been done in Bible revisions of the last few hundred years, which are mainly based on a silent reading of the text.

(3) Where the Luther text is no longer understandable for us to-day, it has been carefully altered. This is not only the case for words where there has been a change of meaning, but also for words which are no longer understandable to-day and have fallen into disuse. The verb forms have also been adapted to present-day usage.

(4) The fact that Luther's text is intended for reading aloud is also to be seen in the fact that Luther does not use any grammatical punctuation, but inserts certain dashes for reading aloud which make the meaning clear, and give possibility for breathing and thus provide for a certain dividing up of the text. These principles have been taken over in this new form of liturgy.

*

This winter, as in previous years, all churches in Germany are called to join in the Bible Week when, for a whole week, the same Bible texts are read, studied and explained in the congregations day by day. The texts for this winter's series have been chosen from the Prophet Jeremiah under the title : "The ground on which God wants to move with us."

*

The *Stuttgart Bible Society* has just brought out two important critical editions which have been out of print for many years : Novum Testamentum Latine edidit D. Eberhard Nestlé and Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine edidit D. Eberhard Nestlé. The Latin text is the official Roman text. At the foot is a complete comparison between the Sistine edition of 1590 and the edition of Wordsworth-White, as also between the letters and the explanations of the editions by Lachmann and Tischendorf and the Fulda and Amiata manuscripts. The Greek-Latin edition is much used by Roman Catholic theologians ; but on the evangelical side also, the value of the Vulgate is recognised.

*

In time for Christmas 1951, the Stuttgart Bible Society published a new illustrated Bible book entitled "Six Parables of Jesus Presented in Twelve Pictures by Karl Kühnle." This is a new attempt to present the meaning of the parables of Jesus in picture form. The illustrations are reproduced partly in black and white and partly in four colours.

Indonesia

The following letter was addressed in the name of the three Societies, the Netherlands Bible Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the National Bible Society of Scotland, which support the work in Indonesia, to the Board of the *Indonesian Bible Society in Formation* for its inauguration meeting :

"In the name of the co-operating Bible Societies, I have the honour to express our great thankfulness on the occasion of the inauguration of your Board. We want to express our ardent desire

THAT your Society may develop into a valuable centre for the work of the spreading of the Gospel in Indonesia ;

THAT in years to come a close co-operation may lead to the covering of the existing needs in the field of Bible production and Bible distribution, and

THAT under God's blessing, this work may grow to be a serving element in the spreading of the Gospel, especially among those who are not yet acquainted with the message of salvation.

" The co-operating Bible Societies think it a privilege given by God to be allowed to accompany this work in His Vineyard with prayer and actual fraternal assistance.

"Asking God's blessing on your responsible task, in the name of the co-operating Bible Societies,

(Signed) F. L. S. F. Baron van Tuyll van Serooskerken."

Japan

From January to July, 1951, the *Japan Bible Society* has circulated 2,213,132 copies of Scripture (43,294 Bibles, 286,101 New Testaments, 1,880,363 Portions, 3,374 Braille portions) as against 881,519 copies during the same period in 1950.

" Part of this increase," writes the general secretary of the Japan Bible Society, " is due, no doubt, to improvement of colportage, but it does confirm our belief that to-day people are ready everywhere to buy the Scriptures, even in villages without electric light. At present we have 150 colporteurs equipped with bicycles, who slowly and steadily distribute the Scriptures from house to house. Their work is truly evangelistic."

A pulpit Bible, a romanised New Testament and a diglot New Testament in Japanese and English were published by the Japan Bible Society during the autumn. The text used for the English was that of the American Standard Edition of the Revised Bible. The next diglot edition of the New Testament will use the Japanese Revised Version and the English Revised Standard Version (U.S.A. 1946).

The revision committees have been continuing their work during the summer. The Old Testament committee has finished the draft of Genesis and the New Testament committee has completed one-third of Mark. These first revised books of the Old and New Testaments were to be printed separately as tentative editions by the end of 1951.

Korea

A Bible House has re-opened in Korea. Premises have been purchased in the port of Pusan, and work has re-started. The import of Bibles into Korea is difficult because of the pressure on shipping space at the present time, but some supplies are getting through, and it is hoped that the position will improve from now on.

North Africa

The first edition of the Gospel of John, the first book of the Bible to be published in Tunisian colloquial Arabic, will shortly be coming off the press in North Africa in 3,000 copies.

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Circulation in North Africa increased by over 19,000 copies of the Scriptures last year. The figures for 1951, with the 1950 figures in brackets, are as follows : 3,472 Bibles (3,299) ; 6,089 New Testaments (6,643) ; 58,787 Portions (39,172).

Norway

In the early autumn the *Norwegian Bible Society* issued its report of activity for the year 1950/1951. This indicates that production difficulties continued during 1950. The total production figures, showing an increase of 30% against those of the previous year, are still beneath the average of the pre-war years. The deficit from the years 1942/1949 may be estimated at 200,000 copies, and consequently the shortage of Scriptures cannot be met until production has been doubled.

The paper situation has deteriorated. The quotas for home consumption have been cut down, and deliveries have constantly been delayed, export orders having priority. India paper has been bought from England, but the orders for 1951 have been cut by 50%. Printing has also been greatly restricted and only three editions were completed by the printers during the year—a total of 90,000 New Testaments. The printing programme for 1951-52 is consequently much higher. (45,000 Bibles, 145,000 New Testaments and 100,000 Gospels are in fact being printed during that period.) Even so, binding is the 'bottleneck' in production. The capacity of the regular Bible binders has been reduced to half the pre-war level owing to the lack of skilled workers. Connections have been established with a number of new binderies all over the country. However, the effect of this will not be noticeable until 1951. From the British and Foreign Bible Society 5,600 Bibles were received during 1950. For delivery during 1951, 10,000 New Testament and Psalms are on order.

The average annual circulation between 1934 and 1942 was 94,560 copies. It fell during the next five years (1943-1948) to 56,280. In 1949-50 the total circulation was again up to 69,829. It rose further during the last working year to 89,911. By the end of the year, the total distribution by the Society since its foundation was 4,829,278 copies of Scripture.

Translators have been working all the year on the new ' Young People's Translation.' The first specimen of their work was published in an illustrated magazine edition of the Gospel of Mark. The other Gospels and the Acts will later be published separately. Preparations are being made for a revision of the New Norwegian and the Lappish translations.

Since the foundation of the Society in 1816, the bye-laws have twice been altered, in 1820 and in 1868. On 16th January, 1951, the Central Committee adopted new bye-laws for the Society. The essential new provisions are :

(1) *An extended aim.* Having till now an exclusively national purpose, the new bye-laws incorporate the world-wide missionary aim, besides the distribution of Scriptures among countrymen at home and abroad. The wording of this particular paragraph is :—

" The aim of the Norwegian Bible Society is to distribute the Holy Scriptures :

(*a*) within the country ;
(*b*) among countrymen abroad and at sea ;
(*c*) in foreign countries and languages.

" The Society seeks to promote this aim by :

(*a*) providing requisite translations :
  i. in the languages of the country (Norwegian in both editions and Lappish) ;
  ii. if needed, and in co-operation with Norwegian missionary societies and the United Bible Societies, in other languages, especially those of the Norwegian mission fields.

(*b*) providing for the printing, binding and sale of the Scriptures at the lowest possible prices, or distribution as free grants."

(2) *A new form of organization*, with individual membership and auxiliaries forming representative membership.

(3) *A new form of management.* According to the old bye-laws, the management of the Society was in the hands of eight independent committees, one in each of the dioceses, the Central Committee in the capital being actually in charge. According to the new bye-laws, the eight committees are in charge of the home side of the work in their respective dioceses, and the Board of Directors of the Society will be the eight chairmen of these committees, the Bishops, and the Executive Committee, consisting of six members elected by the Annual Meeting, the Bishop of Oslo and the General Secretary.

Panama Canal Zone

The Rev. Dr. R. R. Gregory is due to retire at the end of 1951, after 31 years in the service of the American Bible Society and 40 years of missionary activity in Latin America. Dr. Gregory has been working in the Caribbean area, Venezuela, Bolivia and Central America minus Mexico. Here are some quotations from a farewell message which he has sent to his many friends and colleagues :

" Forty years ago, the Roman Catholic Church in the U.S.A. knew very little about the religious condition in Latin America. They were content to regard the entire southern continent as loyal to the church, and anyone who suggested otherwise was considered a bigot. The vast majority of Protestants in North America were equally ignorant of the state of religion in Latin American countries and were indifferent to Evangelical efforts south of the Rio Grande.

" In February of 1916, there was held on the Isthmus of Panama a great Protestant gathering called ' The Congress of Christian Work in Latin America.' Representatives of North American Mission Boards, carrying on work in Latin America, met with missionaries and national leaders. This historic assembly represented the first united approach of Evangelical Christianity in the religious situation in Latin America.

" One of the most remarkable changes in the religious atmosphere in our area is the marked growth of the Evangelical movement and the drive of the Roman Catholic Church against it.

" The modern Evangelical movement in the Caribbean area of our field dates back about 60 years. We have seen the work grow from the day when the missionary was colporteur, preacher, teacher and builder—a person of diversified traits, to the day when a new era dawned and a strong group of nationals emerged out of the harvest of Scripture sowing.

" There was a time when it was difficult to place the Scriptures. To-day it is a question of having a sufficient supply to meet the demand. In 1902, the circulation of the Central America Agency was 16,673 copies. In 1950, it had increased to 225,804. Adding to this, the circulation for the same year of Colombia and Venezuela, we have a total of 474,562. The circulation of 1951 will in all probability exceed that of 1950.

" There is no more thrilling chapter in the Evangelical movement than that which describes the progress made in bringing the written Word to the indigenous people. Through the Bible Society, we have co-operated with the pioneers in the difficult work of reducing dialects to writing and translating the New Testament or portions of the Bible into their respective tongues.

"A Guatemalan statesman describes the Indian as ' a victim of exploitation by the State, the Church and the capital. His history since the Spanish conquest has been one of interminable calvary, of slavery and subjection.' I have often heard the remark : ' In Honduras the burden bearer is the mule ; in El Salvador it is the ox ; but in Guatemala it is the poor Indian.'

" Forty years ago there was not one organised Evangelical congregation among the dialect-speaking Indians of the Caribbean area apart from the Miskito tribe in Nicaragua. Since 1930, the entire New Testament has been translated and published in the dialects of three of the largest Indian groups in Guatemala—the Cakchiquels, the Quichés and the Mams. Encouraging progress is being made in further translation work among others such as the Conobs and K'ekchis in Guatemala and the Valientes and San Blas in Panama. Bible institutes housed in substantial buildings have been established for several groups, preparing young men and women for religious leadership among their own people. To-day, among the Cakchiquels there are more than 50 congregations where services are regularly held.

" The old era is passing and will never return again. Forty years ago railroad milage was almost nil. There were few wagon roads, no automobile or airplane service. The largest towns and cities lacked modern sewerage systems and the electrical age was still in its infancy. Mail service was slow and often delayed.

" Forty years ago it took one week's travel from the Canal Zone to the Pacific port in Guatemala on coast-wise ships. To-day we breakfast in Cristobal and arriving by airplane, lunch in Guatemala City, having touched almost all the capital cities of the six Central American republics.

" In 1920, leaving Cristobal for our first visit to Medellín in the interior of Colombia, it took us twelve days. To-day the airplane leaves Panama at 9.0 a.m. and arrives in Medellín at 11.23 a.m., and within another hour lands at Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, 800 miles from here. We have seen the airplane make distance vanish.

" We are *advancing* might well also be the encouraging headlines that mark the status of the work for the great majority of mission groups in the Caribbean. This Evangelical movement which once was like an obscure

mountain stream is now flowing through a valley that widens into the great plains of continental life.

" Nowhere do we find the work static. Everywhere mission groups are planning some kind of advance, or see the realisation of their cherished dreams. The Evangelical movement is on the march. Like any growing concern, difficult problems have to be faced. To-day there are more trained missionaries than ever for technical programmes coming to the field. The director of one of the larger mission groups says that Evangelical campaigns could be carried out for years to come without a let-up if funds and workers were available.

" Several mission-owned radio stations with daily programmes give forth the Good News. Medical service is being extended on behalf of the underprivileged and orphanages and clinics are part of the mission programme. Child evangelism is going forward with new impetus. All these factors bring a challenge to the Bible Societies to have the Book available to serve the multitudes as Guide and Light."

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Secretary Limkemann, who is to succeed Dr. Gregory in the Agency Secretaryship, reports that the distribution of Scriptures in Central America for 1951 was 277,167 copies of Bibles, Testaments and Portions, as compared with 225,819 in 1950. The increase in the distribution of whole Bibles is very significant, being about 35%.

Scotland

The *National Bible Society of Scotland* has just issued the first complete edition of the Psalms in Tumbuka (10,000 copies). Tumbuka is spoken in Nyasaland, the first part of the Scriptures published being St. Mark's Gospel in 1904, translated by W. A. Elmslie. The New Testament was completed in 1911. In 1931, selected Psalms were published, translated by Dr. W. Y. Turner, and Dr. Turner has now completed the translation of the book of Psalms. He is now working on the manuscript of the Old Testament, produced by Samuel Hara, an African. The first part of that manuscript is now ready for the printers. All publications in Tumbuka have been by the National Bible Society of Scotland.

Sweden

The Swedish General Synod which recently met in Stockholm decided on the advice of Bishops Nygren and Malmeström to have a new 'test' translation of the New Testament and Psalms made which will take account of the latest results of Bible research.

U.S.S.R.

In a radio talk on the Church and the State in the U.S.S.R. given by I. Bilibin on a programme of the British Broadcasting Company, the following information was given about the place of the Bible in religious life in Russia :

" In the past six years the Church has continued to develop the positions which it had secured during the war : more churches have been opened, the network of theological seminaries has been increased on a big scale and the publication of church periodicals and books has continued on a very limited scale. These publications do not include Bibles, Gospels or prayer-books. The only way in which the majority of people can learn about the Scriptures

is by hearing them read in church. That is one of the reasons why the services in Russia now are much longer than they were before. The lessons are read slowly, and the long sermons are mainly devoted to explaining the Scriptures to the congregation."

United States of America

Gospel Recordings Incorporated, California, report overwhelming demands for phonographs on every hand. During 1950 they sent out 70,000 records in many tongues, to many countries. Scripture readings in 120 new languages were recorded during 1950.

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The Connecticut Council of Churches' Board of Directors has voted to accept the responsibility of operating the Connecticut Bible Society which, founded in 1809, was the first agency of its kind in the United States. The President of the Church Council is also president of the Bible Society; the Executive Secretary of the Council now becomes secretary-treasurer of the Bible Society. It is planned to expand the Society's work by distributing Bibles in State and local institutions and by preparing inexpensive copies of the Scriptures for use in religious education programmes.

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People of 34 countries participated in the 1951 observance of Worldwide Bible Reading, a programme sponsored between Thanksgiving and Christmas by the *American Bible Society*, it was estimated by Dr. James V. Claypool, the Society's Secretary for Bible Use. A feature of the observance material, which is supplied without cost by the Bible Society, is the 'book marks' on which have been printed the list of suggested daily readings. The Society prepared 15 million of these bookmarks. The list was also printed hundreds of times in magazines and daily and weekly newspapers.

Two promotion features helped spread publicity on the programme. Many radio stations mentioned the programme through the observance period, offering the reading lists to their listeners. Top libraries throughout the country arranged for a distribution of the book marks along with special displays of Bibles and religious literature. Attractive counter cards, featuring the poster of the programme's theme 'The Way out of the Dark' were furnished to book-stores and book departments in large stores.

President Harry S. Truman served as the Honorary Chairman of the programme. In a letter to the Bible Society, President Truman said: "It is encouraging to know that reading of the sacred Scriptures increases year by year. The labours of the American Bible Society must never be suffered to grow less."

The highpoint of the Worldwide Bible Reading was Universal Bible Sunday, December 9th, which was observed in tens of thousands of churches.

The four major networks of the United States featured the observance of Universal Bible Sunday in programmes arranged by Dr. Francis C. Stifler, the Society's Secretary for Public Relations. Among those participating were Dr. Luther A. Weigle, Chairman of the American Standard Bible Committee, together with Dr. Eugene A. Nida, Secretary for Translations of the American Bible Society, in a panel discussion broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company, concerning the forthcoming appearance of the whole Bible in the Revised Standard Version.

Five dramatic programmes were recorded by the Bible Society to be supplied over 150 stations on the popular religious weekly programme, 'Let there be Light.' The Society's programmes were developed around the five major branches of its work. A translation programme was built around Adoniram Judson and the Burmese Bible; the publication programme presented the current problems of publishing the Korean Bible in the Hankul spelling, and the distribution work pictures colportage as it is being carried on in Japan.

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"The Good Book" is the title of a new film strip with sound produced by the Bible Society, under the direction of Henry H. Ragatz, Secretary of the Visual Materials Department. Its main theme is the influence of the Bible on America. The story is told in 89 coloured pictures, accompanied by a recorded sound programme of music and the voices of a large professional cast.

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Miss S. Ruth Barrett, Secretary of the American Bible Society's Work for the Blind, reports that the Society has just completed and has ready for distribution a new edition of the 18-volume Bible in Braille, grade 2, in the King James' version. The Society also reports an increase in the distribution of the embossed Scriptures and in the distribution of the new ten-inch Talking Book Records to the many blind persons unable to read with their finger tips. The Society has, since 1835, distributed the Scriptures to the blind in 35 languages and systems, the year 1951 being the greatest on record.

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The estimated printing requirements of the American Bible Society in 1952, according to Dr. Gilbert Darlington, Treasurer and head of the Publications Department of the Society, are 14,554,750 copies of Bibles, Testaments and portions of the Bible in English and other languages.

Literacy

The charts and primers for learning to read according to Dr. Laubach's method, are now ready in 96 out of a total of 900 African languages. A further 104 languages are to follow gradually. The remaining 700 are not regarded as sufficiently important.

Notes on Contributors.

J. Blumenthal : Secretary/Treasurer of the French Bible Committee ; Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in France.

The Rev. J. Harts : General Secretary of the Belgian Bible Society.

The Rev. I. S. McElroy : American Bible Society Secretary for the South Atlantic District, U.S.

The Rev. Dr. O. Söhngen : Chairman, Berlin Main Bible Society.

The Rev. W. J. Platt : General Secretary, British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Rev. W. H. Hudspeth : General Secretary, British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada.

The Rev. Dr. W. Zimmermann : Chairman, Altenburg Bible Society, German Democratic Republic.

The Rev. H. W. Coxill : General Secretary of the Congo Protestant Council.

Dr. H. Wilson : Educationist and missionary in Ethiopia.